

OVER THE ALPS

By "SUNDOWNER"

CROSSING the Alps is no more difficult to-day, if you drive from East to West, than getting out of Wellington into the Wairarapa. Though my own crossing was made in rain, it was rain following a long spell of dry weather, and there was no trouble with creeks or slips. But I was glad that I was not travelling the other way. I

very quickly both to the rain and to everything that goes with rain on the Coast—as I am sure everybody does who goes there without prejudice.

I certainly thought it a little strange when Allan Wood of the Westport Times told me what he liked best in Westport was the climate. I had known Allan both in Christchurch and in Dunedin, and I thought I knew that for every inch of rain in Christchurch Westport had four inches, and at least two for every inch in Dunedin; that Christchurch had far more sun, and Westport far more wind. But I was assured that I was wrong about everything but the rainfall, and that rain, as soon as it stopped on the Coast, was at once forgotten.

Well, I am glad to know that I was wrong, and to add that I very soon felt wrong. If you get wet in Otago you feel wet, and cold, and generally miserable. I can't say that I enjoyed the rain on the West Coast, but I was never really cold there, and when I look back now the rain seems as natural, as necessary, as easy to accept and far easier

to forget than the mountains, which I saw only twice, and the bush, which far more than the weather, the hotels, or the long Pacific rollers, really is Westland.

When I asked a man in Ross how long a particular shower would last he looked at me for a moment before he answered. I think he was wondering how smart I thought I was. But here is what he said:

"You're on the Coast, aren't you? What's wrong with this?"

* * *

I HAD never before driven through a hundred miles of forest of any kind, and it would not be quite accurate to say that I did so in South Westland. Though it is more than a hundred miles from the Taramakau to the Waiho, the

MILES OF RIMU

bush has in places been cleared, and when deductions have been made for the four major gaps at Hokitika, Ross, Hari Hari, and Wataroa, there may remain only about 50 miles of bush so near to the road that you can touch it with your hand as you pass. But, in these 50 miles, long stretches are still predominantly rimu, and I found it deeply moving to glance up mile after mile and see these gloriously straight trunks towering above the road on either side. After Waipoua, which is not so much an excitement as a solemn experience—a kind of resting place between two eternities—South Westland

(continued on next page)



"When I look back now the rain seems as natural, as necessary, and as easy to accept as the mountains and the bush."

had crossed Arthur's Pass both ways on foot, and I still think that there is no other way of crossing if it is the mountains themselves you want to feel. The moment we accept aid from petrol we pay petrol's price—cease to listen and cease to see for the mesmeric sensation of movement. I don't think I exceeded 15 miles an hour between Arthur's Pass and Otira, but even crawling like that I was moving four or five times as fast as a sensible man walks, seeing little but the road in front of me, hearing nothing but tyre and engine noises, and smelling nothing but rubber and gas. I had made my contract with the devil of ease and speed, and those were his terms.

THE rain continued all the way to the sea, and all the way—with one slight break—to the Franz Josef glacier. It rained at the glacier and it rained all the way back (with two breaks) to Reefton. I had one fine day at Lake Kanieri, half a day fine at Ross, and one brilliant hour (in three days) in front of the ice in the Waiho Gorge. In 17 days that was

WHAT'S WRONG WITH RAIN?

all the sun I saw south of the Buller, though it was bright, calm, and mild during my only day in Westport.

But when I look back after eight or 10 weeks I have no feeling of wetness at all. I know that it rained because I recorded the facts at the time, but I have so dim an impression of it all now that I must have adapted myself

TONKING'S Stops the Family's Coughs



SURELY
QUICKLY
SAFELY..

Regular doses of TONKING'S Cough Mixture soon loosen up congestion—brings quick relief to sore throats, inflamed breathing passages. TONKING'S stops coughs, relieves colds, and is invaluable for hoarseness, whooping cough, bronchitis and similar ailments.

Make sure you get TONKING'S—indispensable for the kiddies—equally beneficial for adults. Sold everywhere in three sizes.

Distributors:
Sharland & Co. Ltd.,
99 Dixon Street,
Wellington.

TONKING'S Cough Mixture

X37

NEW SLOAN'S BALM
gives **QUICKER**
PAIN RELIEF!

This amazing new formula brings speedy relief to agonizing aches, pains and twinges! New SLOAN'S BALM acts faster... penetrates deeper... brings longer-lasting relief. Has a clean, pleasing scent. Just pat it on. Get a tube today—From all chemists and stores.

SLOAN'S
BY THE MAKERS
OF SLOAN'S
LINIMENT *Balm*

Chamberlain's (N.Z.) Ltd., 49 Swanson St. Auckland. (Successors to Dr. East & Sloan Ltd., London.)